JIGSAW

BY DAN DE FAZIO & CHRISTINA A. STILES

Mad, bad, and dangerous to know

Artwork by Tony DiTerlizzi
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Christina writes: "I'm excited finally to be a part of the magazine I've enjoyed since its first issue. I'd like to thank my husband, Tracy, as well as Dan, Tim, Scott, and Calvin for seeing me through to publication. Thanks, guys!"

Dan points out that this represents the longest long-distance collaboration in DUNGEON® Adventures' *history. He and Christina live several states apart, have never met, have spoken on the telephone only a few times, and created "Jigsaw" entirely via the U.S. mail. How'd they meet? Through* DUNGEON Adventures, *which published Dan's address way back in issue #33.*

"Jigsaw" is a RAVENLOFT® adventure for 4–6 good-aligned PCs of levels 4–6 (30 total levels). This scenario takes place in the realm of Gothic Earth, from the *Masque of the Red Death* campaign, in the city of Lausanne, a large town in Switzerland, just north of Lake Geneva.

DMs without access to the *Masque of the Red Death* boxed set can restructure this adventure for traditional AD&D® or RAVENLOFT campaigns by setting the adventure in a large town near a mountainous region, replacing the *Masque* character classes with their AD&D counterparts (soldier = warrior, tradesman = rogue, adept = wizard, and mystic = cleric) and setting the money exchange rate to gold pieces. Also, because Gothic Earth is a low-magic setting, PCs with access to a great deal of magic may imbalance the adventure.

Adventure Background

Victoria von Lendstein is a young noblewoman of great intellect. Her father, Emile von Lendstein, was a physician known for his progressive thinking and somewhat Bohemian lifestyle. When Victoria was four, her mother died of a brain fever, so Emile raised his daughter alone. Instead of raising her as an ordinary noblewoman, educated only in husband-seeking and ballroom gaiety, he encouraged Victoria to be imaginative, studious, and creative, allowing her complete access to his library. Soon she had read all the books within, especially the medical texts. At 15, Victoria decided that she would be the first female physician in the city of Ingolstadt.

When Victoria applied to the University the masters were not pleased. Emile, however, had enough

influence to arrange for her to take the entrance exams. The school administration indulged Emile only because they expected Victoria to fail, putting an end to the matter. To their chagrin, young Victoria earned the highest score. Flabbergasted that a woman with no formal training could score so well on their exam, and having no recourse to prevent her entrance, they admitted Victoria.

Neither the students nor the faculty relished the idea of a female colleague. If women were allowed to be physicians, they mused, soon they could become lawyers, merchants, and even priests. Faced with this ominous scenario, the students and faculty conspired to make Victoria's academic career a nightmare. Her teachers tripled her workload, piling experiments and course work on her beyond her freshman status. The other students mocked her, tampered with her projects, stole her books, and carved obscene messages into the door and walls of her room.

After three months of torment, Victoria succumbed to their harassment and left the University. Determined that his gifted daughter would indeed become a physician, Emile personally initiated Victoria into the sciences of medicine, anatomy, and surgery. Victoria mastered each lesson in a trice. She was brilliant, and the knowledge she gained far outdistanced any she would have received at the University.

Then tragedy struck. A spark from an unattended fireplace ignited the parlor's carpeting, and fire spread throughout the magnificent von Lendstein mansion. In minutes, flames engulfed the entire home. Victoria escaped, but her father was not so fortunate. When the authorities dug his charred body from the rubble, a golden locket, amazingly untouched by the fire, was the only means of identifying her father's body. Victoria took the locket, within which Emile had kept her photograph, as a last memento.

Victoria begged the authorities to investigate further, attempting to convince them the fire was no accident but a malicious attack by the members of the University who did not approve of her studies. Her pleas came to no avail, and the authorities asserted that they had found no evidence of foul play.

Victoria took their seeming lack of concern as a sign that the police were in league with the University members, a fraternity of some sort. Believing the University's network ran deeper than she first suspected, she dropped the matter to pursue her own form of revenge: she would prove the University wrong by becoming the greatest physician of all time.

Armed with a few thousand inherited francs, Victoria purchased a small, dilapidated shop, which she converted to a home and laboratory. She bought as many medical texts as she could find. Her plan for greatness hinged on one important treasure she had procured from the library's furnace room during her stay at the University: a collection of red-inked papers on death and resurrection, the infamous *Frankenstein Papers* (see *A Guide to Gothic Earth,* page 111). The papers were stuffed inside the memoirs of Dr. Waldman, a former professor of the University. Someone had left them, along with several tomes on necrology, to be burned and forever hidden from curious minds.

It was rumored that Dr. Frankenstein, perhaps with some assistance from Dr. Waldman, had succeeded in resurrecting the dead, but none had ever witnessed the feat. Victoria assumed the experiment had not succeeded; otherwise, Dr. Frankenstein would have been celebrated in his time. Thus, she decided the experiment would be worthy of her effort. Once the University's professors viewed her successful creation, they would be forced to acknowledge her superior mind. Then they would grovel like animals, begging her to share her knowledge.

Toward this end, Victoria began scavenging limbs and organs from the gallows and charnel houses. With them, she stitched together a man as the papers outlined, injected him with a special serum, and created a primitive battery to infuse him with life. Though a year passed before her task was complete, success stood before her in the form of a living flesh golem, animated purely by scientific means — or so she believed.

Upon seeing her creation come to life, Victoria was filled not with the elation she had expected, but with disgust. This thing was not human. This patchwork grotesque — this jigsaw creation — that she had hoped would bring her fame would more likely bring about her persecution and condemnation. Frightened by that prospect, she led the child-like creature into a nearby forest, intending to end its life with a well-placed bullet. Yet when she looked into its pitiable yellow eyes, she was unable to squeeze the trigger. Instead, she turned to run. Before she could flee, the creature grabbed her by her cloak. Victoria wriggled out of its grasp and fled into the night, leaving the creature at the mercy of the elements.

Returning to her apartment, Victoria torched her notes and gathered her meager belongings. Departing at dawn, she fled to the town of Lausanne in Switzerland to live with her uncle and aunt, Albrecht and Elise von Thresher.

Days stretched into weeks, weeks into months. Elise von Thresher, Emile's sister, was far more traditional than Victoria's father, insisting that Victoria turn her attention to finding a proper husband. Still horrified by what she had done, Victoria didn't argue but resigned herself to the traditional woman's role her aunt proposed. She felt it might secure her peace of mind. In fact, it wasn't long before the attractive Victoria made the acquaintance of Gustav von Rudiger, a young nobleman whose family had strong political ties in the region. Gustav was kind, well mannered, and thoughtful. After six months of courtship, he asked her to marry him. Victoria happily accepted.

Then cruel fate intervened. While attending a performance of Dr. McGinnis's Traveling Marvels, an American freak show, Victoria spied the horrid object of her creation, and her heart nearly stopped.

It saw her, too.

For over a year, she had felt certain that the elements had claimed her unnatural creation, erasing her mistake forever. She was wrong. Victoria feigned illness, begging Gustav to take her home immediately. He hailed a coach, and the two sped away toward the posh neighborhood where Victoria and her family lived.

The creature saw the two leave together and became enraged. He pushed his way through the crowds and ran after them. His superhuman speed allowed him to keep up with the coach until it arrived at its destination. That night, as Victoria slept, the creature climbed through a window and entered her bedchamber.

Victoria awoke to find the creature's watery, yellow eyes peering down at her. She tried to scream, but the golem

Timeline of Events

November 3, 1891

12:00 A.M. PCs encounter Victoria and Udo in the park (**Scene 1**).

5:00 A.M. If the PCs track Udo to his lair, he flees to Dr. McGinnis's Freak Show (**Scene 4**). Otherwise, he is asleep in his lair.

12:00 P.M. A PC meets with Victoria (**Scene 2**).

November 4

3:00 A.M. Udo visits the room of one of the PCs to explain his situation (**Scene 5**).

3:30 A.M. Udo is back in his lair (**Scene 3**).

7:00 P.M. The Von Threshers leave for an evening at the opera. Victoria remains behind, awaiting the arrival of the PCs (**Scene 6**).

8:00 P.M. The PCs should arrive at the Von Thresher house (**Scene 6**).

11:30 P.M. Udo sneaks into the Von Thresher house and attacks, then flees for the mountain.

12:30 A.M. The Von Thresher family returns home.

November 5–15

Udo does not return. The PCs may use this time to rest and heal, or they may attempt to track Udo.

November 16

Udo arrives at the Von Rudiger chateau and sneaks inside. He hides in the attic overnight, preparing to terrorize Victoria (**Scene 7**).

November 17

8:00 A.M. Victoria and her family arrive at the Von Rudiger estate.

Noon The PCs arrive at the Von Rudiger chateau and are served a light meal. Other overnight guests begin to arrive.

2:00 P.M. Victoria and Gustav show the PCs the honeymoon cottage, located one mile north of the chateau. The PCs may begin preparing their traps.

6:00 P.M. Dinner is served in the PCs' rooms (the dining room is being prepared for the wedding). Snow begins to fall.

8:00 P.M. Winds begin in earnest. Snowfall transforms into a howling storm.

Midnight One of the PCs awakens to find Udo staring at him through his bedroom window. As suddenly as Udo appeared, he is gone.

November 18 (Wedding Day)

9:00 A.M. Victoria awakens to find a bouquet of lilies in her room, despite the fact that all the windows and doors were locked (**Scene 9**).

Noon Victoria and Gustav are married in the chateau's chapel (**Scene 9**).

1:00 P.M. The wedding reception begins (**Scene 9**).

5:00 P.M. Dinner is served. Victoria uncovers her meal to find a dead cat (**Scene 10**).

8:00 P.M. Dinner ends. Dancing begins (**Scene 11**).

10:30 P.M. Complaining of a headache, Justina, Victoria's cousin, leaves the ball and retires to her upstairs room. If the PCs are not watching Justina, Udo follows her to her room and murders her, then departs into the surrounding forest (**Scene 11**).

11:00 P.M. If Justina has been killed, Victoria discovers her body in her room. She and Gustav depart for their honeymoon cottage (**Scene 12**).

11:20 P.M. Udo attacks the coach while the couple is en route to the cottage (**Scene 12**).

clamped its gray, earthy hand over her mouth. To her surprise, the creature had no intention of killing her. Instead, he proclaimed his undying love and adoration for her, promising to forgive her for her actions if she would be his mate. Victoria tried to explain that she was already engaged to Gustav, but the creature would hear none of it.

In frustration, it replied, "Marry me, or I shall kill you both. None shall have you but I."

The monster gave Victoria a week to consider his proposal before departing through the window. Over the past several days, Victoria has been bombarded with love poetry and flowers from the unwavering golem. Victoria is terrified, but cannot confide in Gustav for fear that he will desert her when the truth is revealed. Nor can she turn to the authorities; they would lock her up as a madwoman.

Beginning the Adventure

The adventure begins on the seventh and final day of the creature's time allocation; Victoria is to meet him in the park in the center of town at midnight to give her decision. To involve the PCs in her plight, the DM should give them a reason to be in the park at this late hour so that they encounter the two arguing. It is suggested that the PCs have just exited an opera house not too far from the park, having gone to see the performance of Richard Strauss's *Don Juan*. The DM is free to devise another hook, adjusting the following text appropriately.

Scene 1: A Stroll in the Park

A light snows floats gently in the night breeze, chilling you with its playful touch. Though most of the opera's audience has scattered to their carriages, a few brave the chilly weather, ambling and chattering their way home.

A lone woman clad in a dark, hooded cloak walks ahead of you toward the park. Her stride is quick and sharp, and her boots click loudly on the cobblestone.

Gaslights guide your way to the park's snow-covered maze of vegetation. Ahead, the lone woman continues her brisk pace, then veers from the main road and proceeds down a ravine directly under the park's stone bridge.

Behind her, a dark shape emerges from the trees. The woman seems oblivious to its presence. Momentarily, both forms disappear from view.

If the PCs wish to observe the strange woman (Victoria von Lendstein) further, they must sneak to the edge of the ravine or to the bridge. Only PCs with the hide in shadows proficiency or an *invisibility* spell can move close enough to watch without being seen. Any approach by PCs who are not hiding or *invisible* is 50% likely to attract the woman's attention. Her visitor, Udo, has a keen sense of hearing, so non-thief, non-*invisible* characters are 85% likely to attract his attention. At the approach of strangers, Victoria starts, and Udo runs off into the night. If the PCs do not approach, however, and Udo is the only one to notice them, he stays long enough to hear Victoria's answer.

PCs successfully securing a closer position cannot overhear most of the conversation unless they possess the detect noise proficiency or have access to a *clairaudience* spell.

Read the following to any PC observing the ravine:

The woman stands in the ravine, just to the left of the stone bridge. Her hood is removed now, and you can see from the dim moonlight that she is an attractive brunette in her late twenties. She hugs her arms, trembling slightly as light snow settles upon her shoulders.

The large figure that followed her stands to her right, its features obscured by a dark cloak. The woman seems unnerved by his presence, but she quickly regains her composure. The two engage in a low, heated conversation that is inaudible from your position. The discussion continues for some minutes. Then, without warning, the figure strikes the woman across the face, knocking her to the ground.

"You have two more days to make your decision!" the figure bellows in a distinctly male voice. "At midnight on the second night I shall come to your family's townhouse for your answer. Already you waste too much of my time. You will be mine, or you will die," he thunders, then disappears with inhuman speed into the woods.The dark-haired woman lies sobbing on the cold ground, her head buried in her arms.

Any PCs unable to view the events in the ravine certainly hear Udo's booming voice before he disappears.

Because Udo's actions occur so quickly and unexpectedly, the PCs are surprised on a roll of a 1–5 on 1d10. The PCs are unable to prevent the slap Victoria receives, but they may be able to follow Udo. If the PCs follow him, they are hampered by the darkness, the thick underbrush, the falling snow, and Udo's quickness. A PC skilled in tracking suffers a –8 modifier to his Wisdom due to the snow and dim light. PCs using a light source decrease this modifier to –2. Additionally, the PCs' movement rate while tracking is slowed (see tracking proficiency, *PHB*). The PCs need to make at least three proficiency checks to maintain the trail. The DM should refer to the *DMG* for rules on pursuit and evasion of pursuit.

If Udo is followed, he flees to his lair (**Scene 3**). Otherwise, he circles back to spy on the PCs.

If the PCs approach Victoria, she rises quickly to her feet, backs away from the PCs, and looks for an escape route, as she at first assumes they are robbers and vagabonds. Once the PCs prove that their intentions are to help her, she wipes away her tears and smiles faintly, trying to pretend that nothing is wrong. If the PCs admit they witnessed the exchange between Victoria and the stranger, she breaks down in tears again.

"You must help me," she sobs. "I have no one else to turn to." Her fingers edge beneath her cloak and toward her neck, where she reveals a diamond necklace. "I offer you this if you can help me get rid of him. I... I have more jewelry if this is not sufficient," she sobs. If you will help me, one of you meet me at the Cathedral de Notre Dame tomorrow at noon. I have no time to explain now. It is late and I am very tired. And he may still be out there."

Udo, the Jigsaw Man

Udo, flesh golem, RAVENLOFT: AL N; AC 5; MV 12; HD 9 (40 hp); THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8; S 19, I 17, D 19, C 18; SD (+1 or better weapon to hit — see below); SZ M (6′4″); ML 20; PP 70, OL 97, FT 65, MS 88, HS 80, HN 30, CW 99; RL 5 *(Van Richten's Guide to the Created,* page 96). Proficiencies: climb walls, detect noise, disguise, hide in shadows, ventriloquism, move silently, and open locks.

Udo has the brain of a very intelligent scientist, the body of an athlete, and the hands of a master rogue. In addition to being extremely strong, Udo, unlike most flesh golems, is very agile and fast. He can withstand falls of up to 30′ without damage and can leap distances of 20′. Udo is also a master of disguise (at 6′4″ he is shorter than most golems, so he can pull this off) and an excellent mimic of voices. He finds these talents indispensable when forced to enter an urban environment.

Udo is immune to all cold and electrical attacks, though fire and acid cause normal damage. He is immune to toxins, disease, and any attacks regarding biological functions such as breathing or aging. He is also immune to mind-affecting magic such as *charm person* or *sleep*, and he receives a +4 to saves against magical assaults that cause harm (excluding cold or electrical attacks); failure to save indicates that he receives damage from such spells. Also, because Udo can be hit only by +1 or better weapons, which *Masque of the Red Death* characters have little access to, DMs should allow Udo a weakness. Though normal weapons don't harm him, the items used in his creation (mallets, scalpels, hammers, needles, etc. — items Victoria still possesses) can. One item per PC should exist, and DMs may allow that they inflict double damage, or that any damage received from these items is not repaired by Udo's regeneration abilities (see below). The metal from these items could be melted and formed into bullets. Fire is another weakness.

Udo can attack with both fists in the same round and, if successful, can begin strangling his victim during the next round. Strangulation causes 3d8 hp damage/round. The victim cannot escape unless he has a Strength of 19 or greater. Two people having at least a 17 Strength each can break his grip.

Udo recovers 1 hit point per hour and does not need to rest. If his hit points fall below 0, he ceases to heal, though his body is not dead but incapacitated. If 50% of his body remains intact, he can be repaired. Fire permanently destroys his body, so he has a great fear of it (must make a fear check at –2 when threatened with even small flames). If he is forced too close to flames, consult the fear check results table in the RAVENLOFT campaign set.

Udo is very cunning, and he prefers to survive by his wits rather than his strength. He attempts to avoid direct attacks. If Udo loses half his hit points, he flees combat, returning to fight again after he has healed and when his odds are better.

Udo lives deep within Lausanne's sewers, in a lair to which he returns whenever wounded. His extensive knowledge of Lausanne's sewers allows him to appear anywhere in the city at any time.

Udo has a telepathic bond with his creator. Though Victoria cannot sense the thoughts or emotions of her creation, she can keep no desires, fears, dreams, or feelings from him. At will, he can see through her eyes, and he always knows in which direction she lies, enabling him to track her wherever she goes. He can also "speak" into her mind at will, regardless of range (*Van Richten's Guide to the Created,* page 31).

When Victoria abandoned him outside of Ingolstadt, her cloak, held tightly in Udo's grasp, was ripped free as she fled. Inside the cloak's pockets, Udo found Victoria's diary and a locket containing her picture. He has long cherished the picture of the beautiful Victoria, but he was not able to decipher the writing in the diary until encountering Doctor McGinnis. Unaffected by his horrid appearance, the Doctor and his freaks did not attempt to kill him as did the mob in Ingolstadt when he tried to track Victoria there. In fact, they treated him like family, and Doctor McGinnis even taught him how to read (guided him in remembering how to read, actually), enabling him to read Victoria's diaries and learn the truth behind his existence.

His instincts (telepathy) told him that Victoria had gone to Lausanne to live, so he convinced the Doctor that the freak show should pay a visit there. The Doctor agreed, and Udo was indeed able to find Victoria. Because Udo has experienced love and acceptance from the Doctor and the freaks, he does not hate people as do most of his kind. This is the reason he believes he can convince Victoria to see past his appearance and into his heart. She must have loved him once, he thinks, or she would not have labored so long and hard to create him.

Should a PC recover Victoria's locket from Udo's lair, the item is a *zeitgeber*, something that triggers a reaction in Udo. Upon seeing the open locket, he is stunned for 1d4 rounds as he stares at Victoria's picture and remembers the night she abandoned him.

The necklace Victoria offers as payment is worth 2,000 francs. If the PCs attempt to haggle, she agrees to discuss the details and answer any questions tomorrow. If the PCs offer to escort her home, she gladly accepts. The escort consists of a five-minute walk to the posh North Quarter. If the PCs do not walk her home, Victoria runs from the park as quickly as she can, looking back over her shoulder as she does so.

If Udo wasn't pursued, he follows any PCs accompanying Victoria to see that they do not harm her. He is curious about Victoria's proposal to them and attempts to follow one of the weaker-looking PCs home.

Victoria von Lendstein, physician (physician): AL N; AC 10; MV 12; HD 5; hp 19; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (dagger); D 18, I 18, Ch 16; ML 15. Nonweapon Proficiencies: medicine, biology, chemistry, electricity, etiquette, dancing, and languages: German (native), English, French, Latin, and Spanish.

Victoria is 5′5″ with wavy dark hair. Once fiery and ambitious, her experiments and their repercussions have left her drained, and she longs for the quiet life. Victoria would rather die than have Gustav or her family discover the truth about Udo. As the creature would not accept her offer to construct him a mate (the insult for which he slapped her), Victoria feels she has no recourse other than to kill him. She hopes the PCs will do this for her. If not, she attempts it herself.

Scene 2: The Meeting

Read the following to the PC who meets with Victoria at the Cathedral:

> Snow falls lightly, continuing its dance from the previous night. While you await the woman from the park, you gaze at the sky-bound spires and stunning rose windows of the Cathedral de Notre Dame. Lausanne's citizens bustle past. Only one, a fragile woman bundled in a gray, hooded overcoat, stops to stare at the cathedral with you. "Magnificent, is it not? I suppose you have to be an outsider to appreciate its splendor," she remarks, nodding toward the oblivious passersby.
>
> "I am Victoria von Lendstein," she says. A nasty bruise darkens her face.
>
> She smiles faintly. "I hope you haven't been waiting long. I was trying not to be followed. Likely, he's here already, nearby somewhere, watching..."
>
> She glances in every direction before continuing:
>
> "As you are here, I assume you are interested in my proposal, so I'll be brief. If you decline my request, I ask only that you refrain from speaking about it.
>
> "I am to be married in two weeks to Gustav von Rudiger, a gentleman of one of Lausanne's noblest families; yet I am pursued by another. Normally, I would be flattered by such attention, but this would-be suitor is no normal man." She produces a folded yellow paper from her coat pocket and hands it to you.
>
> It is an advertisement for Dr. McGinnis's Traveling Marvels. Drawings of several odd characters appear on the flyer: a woman with snakes and tattoos, a two-headed man, and a man with a stitched and scarred face. Several similar posters hang on every city block.
>
> "Over a week ago, Gustav and I visited an American freak show. While there, we happened upon one of Dr. McGinnis's 'attractions,' the so-called 'Jigsaw Man.'" Victoria points to the scarred man in the drawing. You can't tell much from the picture, but he seems quite hideous.
>
> "The sight of him chilled my bones; I was so horrified I begged Gustav to rush me home. The freak must have followed us, for that night he broke into my bedroom and awakened me.
>
> "I thought he had come to kill me for gawking at him, but instead he professed his love for me. I told him of my engagement to Gustav, but he would not listen. Before he left, he promised he would kill Gustav and me if I would not consent to his wishes, and he gave me a week to decide. For the past seven days, he has sent bouquets of flowers, numerous trinkets, and frightful love poems. Last night my week was up, and I met him in the park to give him my answer.
>
> "Fortunately, he didn't kill me but gave me two more days to decide. As he is a large and unstable man, I'm sure that I have only two days to live... unless you help me. Gustav is away on business and is not due to return until the wedding, so I do not fear for him.
>
> "As I said, this matter is confidential. If you accept, you and your associates must act with discretion. As payment, I will give you the necklace and an additional 500 francs to protect me. He is quite unstable, so he may try to kill you for helping me.
>
> "Will you?"

If the PC asks Victoria why she has not informed the police about this matter, she says that she doesn't want to besmirch the Von Rudiger and Von Thresher family names by becoming the laughing stock of Lausanne's rumor mill. The matter must be handled discreetly. If she is asked about the slap she received, she says the freak did not like her response to his request. She can be haggled to 750 francs. If the PC can *detect lie,* he finds that Victoria is telling the truth (not the *whole* truth, but the truth, nonetheless).

If the PCs accept her offer, she tells them that she intends to return to the von Thresher home and remain there until Udo comes for her tomorrow night, so it isn't necessary to watch her this evening, as the monster hasn't lied to her to date. She asks the PCs to meet at her house around 8:00 P.M. tomorrow night. Her family is going to a late concert, and the PCs may be able to plan a trap for the man. In the meantime, she suggests they find more information as to his whereabouts at the freak show.

If a PC can read her mind, he finds her thoughts filled with the fear of being ripped to shreds by her stalker. She is afraid but calm, almost as if she were resigned to this fate.

Scene 3: Udo's Lair

This encounter occurs only if the PCs track Udo to his lair. Otherwise, skip to the next appropriate scene.

As the PCs have invaded Udo's home, he fights to defend it and himself. Regardless of when this encounter occurs, Udo soon afterward visits one of the PCs to tell his side of the story if he has not already. (See **Scene 5.**)

Read or paraphrase the following to any players whose PCs have tracked Udo through Lausanne:

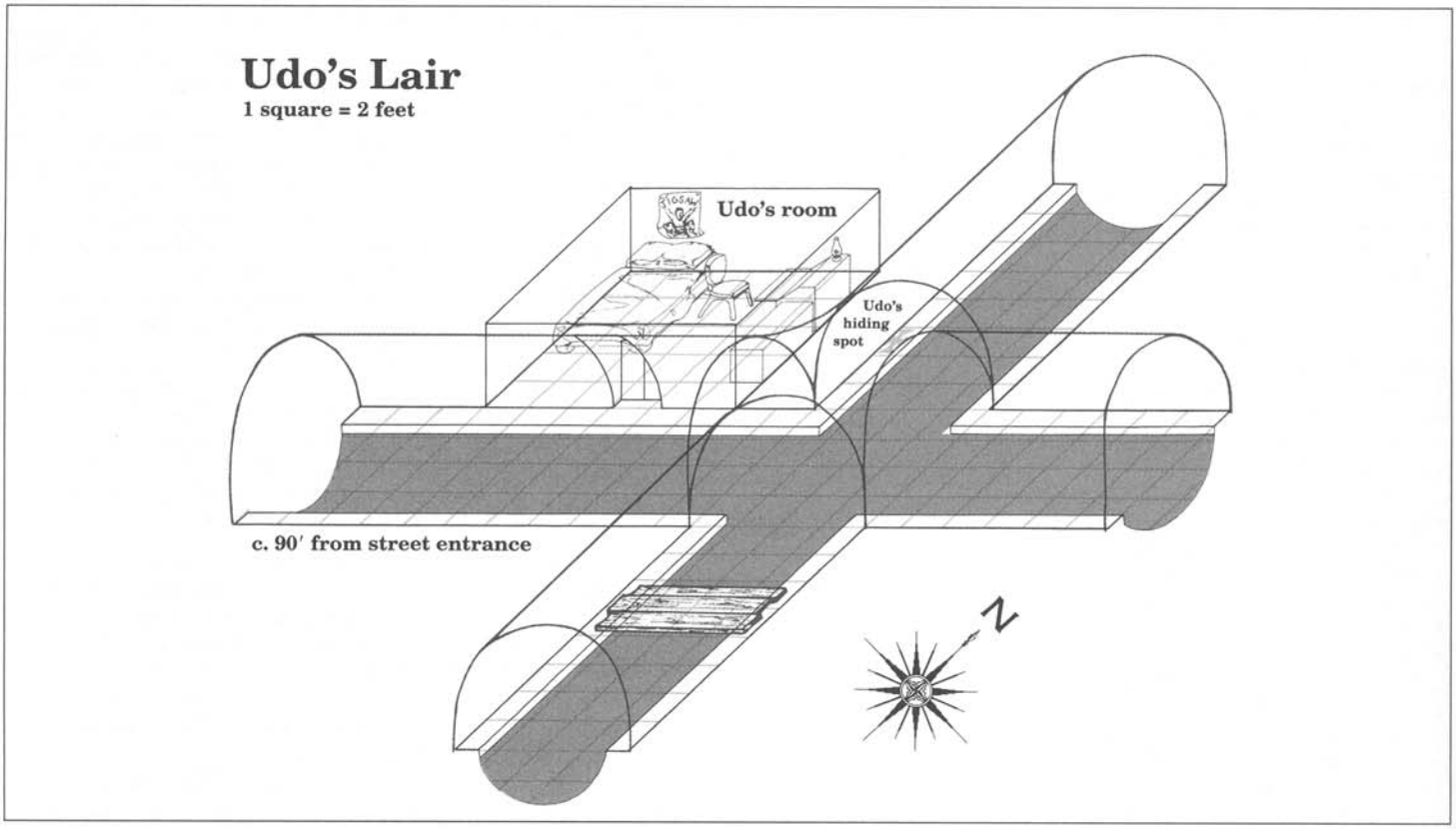
> The trail dead ends into an alley on the southwest side of Lausanne, and the man is nowhere to be seen. A manhole cover lies slightly ajar, six feet in front of you. Faint footprints disappear in front of it.

The PCs need a combined Strength of 18 to pry open the manhole. When the hole is uncovered, each PC must save vs. poison at +2 or become ill. Any PC failing the save suffers a –2 penalty to hit due to uncontrollable vomiting. A light source is necessary to navigate the sewers.

> As the manhole cover is removed, a terrible stench wafts from below. An iron ladder stretches thirty feet into the tunnel. Its rungs are slick with slime and moisture, but you carefully descend its length. Once at the bottom, your light source reveals a round tunnel, eight feet high and eight feet across, running east and west. Rats, some the size of small dogs, dart in all directions, scurrying away from the light. A river of filth runs along its bottom and a one-foot ledge hugs both sides of the tunnel, providing a slimy if precarious means of traversing the sewers. Every five hundred feet down the tunnel to either side is a makeshift bridge of wooden planks.

If the PCs proceed at half their movement rate, they do not slip into the muck. A saving throw vs. paralyzation (at –2 if running) is required by PCs proceeding at a faster rate. Failure indicates that the PC has fallen into the filth.

PCs falling into the 3′-deep river of sewage are not injured but smell horrible for 24 hours. Even bathing does not alleviate the stench entirely, and any clothes worn by the falling PC are ruined and must be thrown away, preferably burned. If the PC continues to wear the foul clothing, his Charisma should be adjusted by –6. The PC must



also make another saving throw vs. poison at +2 or become ill, suffering a –2 to hit in combat. Additionally, any PC falling into the sewage with an open wound is 50% likely to contract a disease (dysentery, cholera, typhoid fever, jaundice, etc.).

In game terms, contracting a disease takes at least a week to have an effect on the PC. At the end of the week, the PC feels sluggish, suffering a –1 to Dexterity, a –1 to hit, and a –1 to Constitution. These effects are doubled for every week the disease is left untreated. When the PC's Constitution reaches 0, the PC dies.

The makeshift bridges along the tunnel are not the sturdiest means of crossing the river as the planks have become rotten with age. Anyone walking on the planks has a 30% chance of falling through them. This percentage is cumulative if multiple PCs cross them simultaneously. Any PC jumping to the other side of the tunnel must make a successful Dexterity check or fall into the sludge.

Magical light sources are safest when traveling through the sewers. There is a 5% cumulative chance per torch or lantern burning per turn that the PCs ignite a methane pocket. The result of such an encounter is a sudden, loud explosion. Each PC suffers 1d8 hp damage and is struck deaf for two full turns. In addition, all nonmagical light sources extinguish. The DM may warn the PCs about the dangers of carrying an open flame in the sewers or may choose to let them discover this for themselves.

Udo's Lair

Udo's lair lies almost a mile to the east of the sewer entrance, near an intersection of two main tunnels. It used to be a safe house for thieves. When Udo decided to quit the freak show to pursue his love, he went underground to hide. Read the following:

> At the eastern end of the tunnel, almost a mile from where you first entered, a seven-foot-tall, heavily dented, metal door rests along the left wall. A faint yellow light filters out from underneath the door.

When the the PCs open the unlocked door, read or paraphrase the following description:

> The metal door swings noisily open and the light from within brightens, spilling out into the tunnel. A few rats scatter from the noise. No one is inside. A makeshift cot lies along the north wall. A poster advertising Doctor McGinnis's Traveling Marvels hangs on the wall above it. A desk, a chair, and a bookcase lie on the east side of the room. A lit oil lamp and an open newspaper, several days old, sit upon the desk.

The room's floor is coated with slime, and the stench inside is as nauseating as the tunnels.

Udo's mattress is covered in body lice, and any PC searching it has a 40% chance of acquiring them. Any PC acquiring the lice who fails to seek treatment becomes infected with a bacterial disease that grows inside the cells lining the blood and lymph vessels. The PC suffers a rash, a fever, and other flu-like symptoms (–1 to Constitution for every week left untreated). When the PC's Constitution reaches 0, he dies. Nonmagical treatments are 75% effective. There is nothing of value in or under the cot's mattress. The poster above the cot heralds the

"Jigsaw Man" as the headlining act of Dr. McGinnis's freak show.

The desk drawers contain papers and writing supplies. The papers are half-finished poems to Victoria. They suggest an intelligent and educated author, but the verses contain an underlying sense of threat in addition to the usual romantic protests and entreaties.

The bookshelves contain poetry by Keats and Shelley; some existential works by Søren Kierkegaard (*Either/Or* and *Stages on Life's Way*) and Friederich Nietzsche (*The Birth of Tragedy*); and the diaries of Victoria and Udo von Lendstein (Udo took his creator's last name as his own, though the PCs may assume that the two are related). The *Frankenstein Papers* are hidden behind Kierkegaard's *Either/Or*. The locket Victoria recovered from her father's body and subsequently lost to Udo in the woods is inserted in the middle of Victoria's diary like a bookmark.

Anyone touching the shelves discovers they are coated with a colorless, greasy substance (oil).

Udo has spread the oil here as a trap for any intruders. The trail of oil extends from the room to his hiding spot around the corner (marked with an X on Udo's Lair Map). The slime on the room's floor and on the walkway outside the room makes the presence of the oil practically undetectable. Anyone actively searching the floor has a 1-in-6 chance of seeing it.

Five minutes after all or most of the PCs have entered the room, Udo ignites the trail by smashing a lit lantern onto the oil. If the PCs are standing watch outside the door, they should roll a 1d10 for surprise. Any unsurprised PC may attack with a missile weapon (if in hand).

Surprised PCs (those inside the room and within 5′ of the entrance) suffer 1d6 hp damage. Unsurprised PCs save for half damage. PCs exiting Udo's room suffer an additional 1d6 hp damage.

The fire burns for a total of six rounds, consuming everything left in the room (except the *Frankenstein Papers*). Each round the fire burns, there is a 20% chance of igniting the methane-filled air surrounding the PCs. When the fire begins, Udo leaves via the north tunnel and heads to the surface. Unsurprised PCs, PCs with the tracking proficiency (–5 modifier due to the slime), and PCs possessing magical tracking ability may attempt to follow Udo. If Udo is not pursued, he spends the night at the freak show; otherwise, he travels the city throughout the night, trying to avoid pursuit.

Any books or papers picked up by the PCs are 40% likely to have caught on fire from Udo's attack. A burning book requires a saving throw vs. normal fire (19 for paper) to remain intact. If the PCs escape with Victoria's (or Udo's) diary, they may learn the truth of Udo's existence. If so, they may desire to confront Victoria with the truth at the Von Thresher house the night of the trap (or at **Scene 2**, if they tracked Udo from the park). If confronted with this, Victoria does not deny it. She does, however, offer them more money to stay on. How the PCs react to this information will definitely affect the outcome of this adventure (see **Moral Dilemma**).

Scene 4: The Freak Show

At some point, the PCs may visit the freak show to learn more about the "Jigsaw Man." The show runs three times daily: 10–11 A.M., 2–3 P.M, and 5–6 P.M. At any given time, 5d10 people are present. People arriving between or during shows are offered the chance to buy souvenirs and pamphlets describing the freaks but are not allowed entrance to the tent until the next showing. Admission costs one franc per person for the general showing and an additional franc each for the main attraction: Mr. Electrico.

If the PCs approach during business hours, read the following:

> The freak show, Dr. McGinnis's Traveling Marvels, is located on the edge of town and is nearly at the end of its engagement. A ramshackle red and green tent rises from the center of several multi-colored wagons. On each wagon are paintings depicting the show's various acts: a bearded woman, a contortionist, a sword swallower, dwarves, a two-headed giant, etc. A man wearing a top hat and a striped suit stands beneath the freak show's red announcement banner. He cries out to the gathering crowd: "See Dr. McGinnis's amazing freaks of nature brought to you directly from the United States of America. They will SHOCK you! They will HORRIFY you! They will THRILL you!

The *Frankenstein Papers*

The *Frankenstein Papers* are a tainted magical item. Professor Waldman, a powerful adept and member of the Order of the Endless Night, a qabal in league with the Red Death, rewrote Victor Frankenstein's papers in his own blood (thus the red ink) as part of a spell ritual. By doing so, he was able to ensorcel the papers with the power to implant an obsession in the mind of the reader. Waldman intended to spread the paper throughout Ingolstadt's University, inspiring the students there to create more creatures like Frankenstein's.

Unfortunately for him, the spell incited madness in the professor. Though he was able to complete the papers, he committed suicide by leaping from the University to his death just seven days after the ritual. By this time, he had already placed the papers into one of his books in the library to be picked up by curious students. His plan did not have a chance to succeed, however, as the deans of the University requested Waldman's works be removed from the library and burned to prevent any students from likewise becoming mad by the strange man's ideas.

The papers were discovered by Victoria during her stay at University. She read them and became obsessed with creating a golem. When they fell into Udo's hands, he likewise read them, but they did not affect him due to his immunity to mind-affecting spells.

If a scientist, physician, or adept PC reads the manuscript, he must save vs. spell or become obsessed with raising the dead as well. The idea sprouts like a seed, taking full root within 4–7 weeks, whereupon the PC begins spending all his time walking the graveyards in search of fresh corpses. If not stopped, the PC will succeed in completing a golem like Udo in a matter of months. If PCs of another class read the papers, they must make madness checks, as they do not possess the knowledge or skills to create a golem. A successful save indicates the PC is not adversely affected.

The papers cannot be destroyed by acid or fire. Many qabals would like to get their hands on these papers.

Encountering the Authorities

If the police are summoned in this adventure, 2–5 (1d4+1) officers arrive on the scene, unless otherwise noted. These officers are 1st-level soldiers and have 5 hp each. Anyone arrested is fined 25 francs for a first offense, 50 francs for a second, and 75 francs for a third offense. Minor offenses such as brawling usually require an overnight stay in jail in addition to any fines. A fourth offense requires a day in jail and a hearing before a magistrate. Anyone found guilty is required to spend 2d10 additional days in jail.

If the PCs confront the police about Victoria's problem, the authorities send 2–5 officers to help capture, not kill, Udo, if the PCs can convince them that lives are in danger. If the PCs tell them about Udo's creation (if they know at this point), the authorities cannot arrest Victoria for performing necromancy, as it did not occur within their jurisdiction, nor are they likely to believe such a story.

Udo fights to the death to prevent being captured. If he is captured, stories about the incident hit the papers. The stories are 75% likely to disgrace the Von Rudiger and Von Thresher family names. If they do not, the wedding continues as planned; otherwise, the wedding is called off , and Victoria flees the country. The PCs become enemies of the Von Thresher and Von Rudiger families for life, along with Dr. McGinnis and his freaks, who go out of their way to attack individual PCs. The DM may also have the freaks attempt a rescue of Udo from the jail. If they succeed, Udo's first action is to find the PCs and kill them.

The repercussions of police intervention in this adventure are many and varied; as such, they cannot be fully covered here.

An amazing collection of ODDITIES from around the world — DOCTOR MCGINNIS'S TRAVELING MARVELS! A mere franc is all it costs, Ladies and Gentlemen. A bargain you can't afford to miss. Step right up. Step right up!"

To the left of the hawker, a tattooed woman with vipers encircling her forearms sways back and forth on a 4′ platform to the music of a flute. Her accompanist is an 8′-tall, two-headed man (Garth/Barth the ettin, a genuine freak) dressed in blue Arabian pantaloons, a matching vest, and two bright yellow turbans. To the hawker's right, two 3′-tall dwarves in black suits stand upon a ticket booth. One sells tickets, while the other sells framed pictures of the show's freaks.

Away from the show's entrance, a man is painting a wagon. The word "Jigsaw" remains uncovered by his new painting of a man sitting in an electric chair. A jittery man in a blue body suit with a large, yellow lightning bolt down the back supervises the work. His costume is the same as that of the man in the new painting.

If the PCs pay to see the show, they are given a tour by Dr. McGinnis himself, a tall, thin man dressed in a long jacket, a black cowboy hat, and boots with spurs. His voice is soft and conspiratorial as he begins his theatrical presentation:

"Ladies and Gentleman, the sights you are about to see are not for the faint of heart. I have traveled far and wide to bring you the world's most amazing creatures, creatures the likes of which science cannot begin to explain. Should you become ill at the sight of them, please exit the tent discreetly so as not to alarm some of the more… dangerous exhibits. The more savage ones are, of course, in chains. When excited, however, they become incredibly strong, and no bonds can hold them."

"My intention is not to scare you, dear patrons. It is to entertain and educate. To enhance your safety, several capable guards are stationed within. Careful and slow movements will best avoid irritating the exhibits and preclude need of these guards.

"If you are ready, let us proceed." He swings a long arm toward the tent's entrance.

Inside, the tent is dark, except for a few lanterns hanging from the tent posts. A 10′-wide roped walkway, with heavy, red curtains to either side, extends the length of the tent. Ropes for unveiling the exhibits hang from the ceiling at 12′ intervals. Three bald, heavily muscled men with cutlasses at their sides stand at various posts.

Dr. McGinnis tells the crowd the history of each exhibit before he pulls the rope, revealing the amazing oddity within. Most of the freaks perform a song, dance, recite poetry, or merely wander about ferociously on stage for the three minutes the curtain is held open. Almost an hour is spent viewing and hearing about the nine general exhibits: a bearded woman named Lady Olga (fake); a troupe of five singing and dancing Chinese midgets (real); a ferocious, chained lion man (fake); two small, dark-skinned men in loincloths touted as the "Wild Men of Borneo" (fake); Princess Garvanna from Atlantis, a mermaid (fake); Sir Charles Roberts, an armless man who sips coffee with the aid of his feet (real); Thin Freddy, a contortionist (real); Franco the sword-swallower (real); and Mexic, a pinhead and lone ancestral survivor of the ancient Aztec civilization (fake).

As the PCs near the end of the roped pathway, one curtain remains closed.

"I have one more oddity to share, and he is stranger in truth than all the others yet revealed."

He grabs the rope to the last curtain. "Because this exhibit has strained my pockets severely to bring to your town, I require the additional deposit of one franc." The three armed men from the posts amble to Dr. McGinnis's side.

"Those who wish to see this wondrous spectacle should give my companions your coin. Those who have seen enough, I bid you a good day."

If the PCs stay to see the last display, Mr. Electrico (real), read or paraphrase the following:

"Direct from New York City, I present Mr. Electrico." He pulls the curtain aside to reveal the man in the blue body suit you saw earlier. He is seated in an enormous wooden chair, a metal bowl perched atop his head. Wires and tubes extend from the bowl to the length of his arms. The giant, two-headed man from the entrance stands behind him, his hand on a switch.

"Struck by lightning seven times by age ten, Mr. Electrico can withstand extreme currents of electricity! A normal man would be killed instantly by one-tenth the voltage we are about to send through his body."

Dr. McGinnis motions for the two-headed man to flip the switch. A loud sizzling, snapping sound ensues, and

Mr. Electrico's body jerks back and forth. His face contorts in agony and his white hair extends out in every direction. The two-headed man holds down the switch for well over a minute before releasing it. Mr. Electrico's body sizzles to a halt. He remains still, eyes closed. Then, miraculously, his eyes open, and he rises slowly. The crowd around you gasps. Mr. Electrico laughs maniacally, then jumps off the stage. Still laughing, he runs out the exit.

"Thank you all for coming. I hope you've enjoyed the show. Have a good day," says the Doctor as he walks out the exit. His muscle men surround the pathway and begin pushing stragglers out of the tent.

If the PCs don't care to see the show but desire to see Dr. McGinnis, they are granted their request for a sum of 10 francs. A convincing journalist PC may have the fee waived by saying he is doing a story on the Doctor and his show. The audience is granted between shows or after the last one, depending upon when the PCs arrive. Refusal to pay, if required, results in the PCs' being asked to leave the grounds. This can be voluntary or forced (see the Muscle Men's statistics below).

Unannounced PCs caught sneaking around the tent and wagons are attacked by the muscle men, Franco the sword-swallower, the two-headed man, and Serpentina (see statistics below), especially after dark; if this isn't enough force to remove the PCs, the other performers and laborers assist. The freaks handle their own security, but an all-out brawl brings the police to the freak show within six rounds. Dr. McGinnis does not fight unless personally attacked.

If the PCs are allowed an audience with Dr. McGinnis, Franco remains with him at all times. Read or paraphrase the following:

The inside of Dr. McGinnis's wagon is dark even though thin shafts of light creep through the wagon's narrow shudders. Dr. McGinnis is seated at the far end of the wagon behind a makeshift desk. His western attire is as dark as the room, a sharp contrast to the white hair that juts from

Freak Show Members' Statistics:

Franco, sword-swallower: AL N; AC 10(7); MV 12; Tradesman (performer) 5; hp 27; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA +1 damage; S 17, D 17; saber (carries several), dagger, and club.

Franco is extremely loyal to Dr. McGinnis and obeys his every command. He is also in love with Serpentina and attempts to kill anyone who harms her.

Garth/Barth (two-headed man — ettin): AL CN; AC 3; HD 6 (unusually small, 8′ tall); hp 35; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8/1d10 + weapon; SD Surprised only on a 1; I 5; XP 2,300.

The ettin is another one of Dr. McGinnis's truly strange freaks. Doctor McGinnis discovered Garth/Barth hiding in the North Carolina mountains. Dr. McGinnis took the creature, a mere starving child, into his care, taught him how to speak, clothed and fed him, and offered him friendship as well as a job. Though not very bright, Garth/Barth is loyal and does everything within his power to protect the Doctor and his friends. He avoids contact with the PCs.

Mister Electrico: AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; Tradesman (performer) 4; hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SD immune to electricity; dagger, club.

Mr. Electrico has been with the freak show for over a year, though not as a performer. When Udo left, Dr. McGinnis offered him Udo's position as the headlining act, a role he has filled for over a week now. Mr. Electrico's talent lies in being able to withstand high voltages of electrical current. After his performances, he is rattled and cannot hold a coherent conversation. His body jerks spasmodically at times and spittle flows freely from his mouth. More often than not, he can be found running about the wagons, laughing insanely.

Within an hour after his performance, Mr. Electrico regains his senses. He knows the following about Udo: he resigned a week ago; he writes beautiful poetry; and he still visits Dr. McGinnis, dropping by one or two times a week.

Laborers (15): AL N; AC 10; MV 12, Tradesman (laborer) 1; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; club, dagger. The laborers join any fights only as a last alternative. They prefer to stand on the sidelines and take bets, shunning any questions as they fear for their jobs.

Muscle Men (Hanzric, Galdric, and Dalric — brothers): AL CN; AC 10; Soldiers 3; hp 24, 20, 19; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; SA +1 damage; S 17; army pistol, dagger, cutlass.

The muscle men are the first to enter any fray, as they love to fight. They won't talk to the PCs about anything, unless they are first defeated in a fair fist fight. If the PCs defeat them, they gain their respect and meager knowledge: Udo left the show, he's living somewhere in Lausanne's sewers, and he visits with Doctor McGinnis to discuss philosophy.

Painter: AL N; AC 10; MV 12, Tradesman (laborer) 1; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; club, dagger.

The painter is a hired laborer, not a member of the freak show. He is irritated by Mr. Electrico's need to supervise his work. He is closemouthed, desiring only to finish his job, get paid, and get drunk at the local bar. If given a bribe of at least five francs, he confirms seeing the "Jigsaw Man" two days ago, hanging around Dr. McGinnis's wagon.

Performers (15): AL N; AC 10; MV 12; Tradesman (performer) 2; hp 8, 7, 9, 10, 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; club, dagger, hand axe.

Serpentina, mistress of reptiles: AL N; AC 10; MV 12; Tradesman (performer) 4; hp 18; THAC0 19; #AT 1 (or by weapon type); Dmg by weapon type; SD pet snakes; hand axe, dagger, and saber.

Serpentina is Austrian and one of the freak show's better fighters. She is highly suspicious of everyone, including her coworkers, and she is not open to questions. She associates only with Dr. McGinnis and her paramour, Franco. She knows Udo has left the show and occasionally comes to see the Doctor, but she won't share this knowledge. If pressured for information, she throws her snakes on the PCs and draws her saber while yelling for the others to join her.

Boa Constrictor: AL N; AC 6; MV 9; HD 3+1; THAC0 17; hp 28; #AT 2; Dmg 1/1d3; SA constriction; ML 15; XP 175.

Vipers (4): AL N; AC 5; MV 15; HD 2+1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 0 (defanged); ML 8; XP 175 each.

beneath his black cowboy hat. His feet are kicked up on the desk as he puffs a Cuban cigar.

Seated on the desk in front of him is a muscular man in his mid-twenties, clad in tight-fitting, black leather clothing. He holds a sword in his hand, admiring the blade, and wears several smaller ones around his belt. Both men eye you suspiciously.

"Good day," says the old man after a moment of silence. "I am Doctor McGinnis." His voice is low and soft. You see now that his blue eyes are as wild as his white hair. "This is Franco, my assistant. What can I do for you fine folks?"

Doctor Bailey McGinnis: ex-physician and freak show owner: AL N; AC 10; MV 12; Tradesman (physician/performer) 6; hp 25; THAC0 18; #AT 1 (or by weapon type); Dmg by weapon type; army pistol (2), derringer, and dagger.

Doctor McGinnis is a former physician who dabbles in the occult. Once a promising surgeon, the good doctor's medical license was revoked after he was caught robbing graves. After losing his practice, he joined his great uncle, James (McGinnis) Bailey of the Barnum & Bailey Circus on a tour of the United States. He found Barnum's attempts at freak foolery blasphemous, so he left the troupe in the 1870s to form a show of his own. His desire was to compete against the great showman by finding irrefutable "freaks of nature" to attract and educate the populace. After a time, however, he admitted to himself that truth and money often did not go hand in hand, so he reverted to using Barnum's tricks of the trade, though sparingly (fake exhibits are indicated earlier).

Udo, the "Jigsaw Man," was his greatest attraction to date, and the scientific truth behind Udo's existence astounded him. Yet, Dr. McGinnis does not look at Udo as one of the freaks. Udo is a friend, much like Franco. He has enjoyed instructing Udo in reading, writing, and learning in general. Though the golem has left his employ, they still meet to discuss philosophy and great works of literature. He cannot understand how Udo's creator could abandon such a magnificent creature.

Dr. McGinnis answers the PCs' questions truthfully as long as he doesn't think they mean to harm Udo. He says that Udo worked at the freak show but quit over a week ago to pursue a personal matter. He has seen him off and on, but his visits are unplanned. He was a good worker, never complained, and his act consisted merely of displaying himself to the horrified public.

Of course, if the Doctor answers the PCs' questions, he expects them to answer some of his. He wants to know whether Udo is in any trouble and why the PCs are inquiring about him. If the PCs imply a threat to Udo, McGinnis asks them point-blank whether they intend to harm his friend. If the PCs don't answer his questions, he refuses to answer any more of theirs, telling them to leave immediately and not to return.

Unless Udo is captured or specifically requests his assistance, the Doctor does not interfere in the matter. If Udo is killed, the loss of his friend creates a bitterness in the Doctor's heart, and he loses his love for showmanship, selling his show to Franco within a year after Udo's death. If he learns the PCs are responsible, he vows to kill them. His dabblings in the occult are bringing him closer to the Red Death's control; Udo's death seals his fate.

If Udo is currently fleeing from the PCs, he may be hidden in a secret compartment under the floor of Dr. McGinnis's wagon (only if the PCs found his lair — 25% chance he is in the wagon). The secret compartment can be found by anyone making a thorough

search of the car, but Dr. McGinnis will not allow such a search. If the PCs attempt to search the wagon or the grounds by force, the Doctor and Franco fight them while Serpentina rallies the rest of the forces. Any large brawl attracts the authorities, who arrive within six rounds. Unless the PCs can provide solid evidence of wrongdoing on behalf of the freak show, the police arrest the PCs for starting a riot. They are fined and jailed according to the number of offenses they have committed.

Scene 5: A Visit to the PCs

If Udo succeeded in following a weak-looking PC home from **Scene 1**, he enters the PC's room at midnight to tell his side of the story. His intention is to win the PC's sympathy and to gain his assistance in coaxing Victoria into marrying him.

Udo uses his rogue proficiencies to break into the PC's room while he sleeps. The PC chosen should be either isolated from the others, physically weak, or both. This encounter assumes that the PCs are staying at an inn or some type of house with separate rooms. It also assumes that the PCs have not taken any precautions against intruders, such as watches or doubling room occupancy. If the PCs sleep in groups, Udo strikes at some other time when his chosen victim is alone. If he is attacked while breaking in, he flees.

This encounter should occur before the planned stakeout at Victoria's. If Udo encounters the PC in some place other than a bedroom, modify the following text accordingly:

> You are awakened with a start as a callused hand covers your mouth, preventing you from screaming. A pair of yellow eyes stare at you through the darkness.
>
> "Don't move," says the intruder in a low, raspy voice. "If you resist, I will kill you. I want only to talk."

DMs should roll for a fear check at this point. If the DM is running this adventure in a traditional AD&D setting, it is advised that the PC be required to save vs. paralysis to imitate RAVENLOFT's fear check. Failing the roll means the PC is too frightened to move.

The PC is in a losing position; even if he screams, odds are he'll be dead before the other PCs can arrive to assist. If the PC insists on struggling, Udo strangles the PC to death. Udo receives a +4 to hit if the PC is in a prone position. Udo strikes first, even if the PC has hidden a weapon in the bed or can acquire one quickly. If Udo kills the PC and the others are not alerted, he enters the room of another PC to plead his case. Assuming the first PC approached does not resist, however, read the following:

> The creature relaxes his grip, allowing you to breathe. Moonlight streams across his face, illuminating his sickly, gray features. His face is a thin layer of stitched flesh stretched tightly over a malformed skull. His mouth contains two rows of brown, rotted teeth and a blackened tongue. Large, irregular stitches line his shirtless body, and a stomach-churning odor fills the air, almost choking you.
>
> "Not so pretty, eh?" he whispers. "People call me a monster. Yet, what of the monster's creator? Who is more cruel?"

The creature awaits a reply. He is here to tell the PC his side of the story, so he answers any questions truthfully. If the PC does not ask any questions (unlikely), he tells the PC the following: how Victoria created and abandoned him; the horror of his life as a freak; and that he loves Victoria, even though she has been so cruel to him. If the PC seems sympathetic, Udo asks for his help in convincing Victoria to marry him. If the PC is sarcastic or unwisely belligerent, Udo is 75% likely to attack; otherwise he flees.

If the PC listens to Udo's story, read the following:

> "I have come to enlist your aid. I want you to understand me so that you may explain my feelings to Victoria. I love her, and I want to marry her. I don't want her to create a companion for me; I could not bear to have the horror of this existence inflicted upon another. Victoria should take responsibility for what she made — for me. If she only knew the real me, she would see that beneath this veil of rotten flesh is a love as boundless as her cruelty."
>
> "Take this with you," says the creature, pressing a cold metal object into your hand. "It is an engagement ring. In my anger I neglected to give it to her. Carry my proposal to her, and explain my view. Don't let her fool you into believing I am evil. Remember who hired you to kill me."
>
> With incredible speed, the creature throws open the window, launches himself across the rooftops of Lausanne, and vanishes into the darkness.

If the PC tries to follow, pursuit proves difficult at best. Udo is able to leap the 10'–20' distances separating most of Lausanne's buildings with ease.

A Moral Dilemma

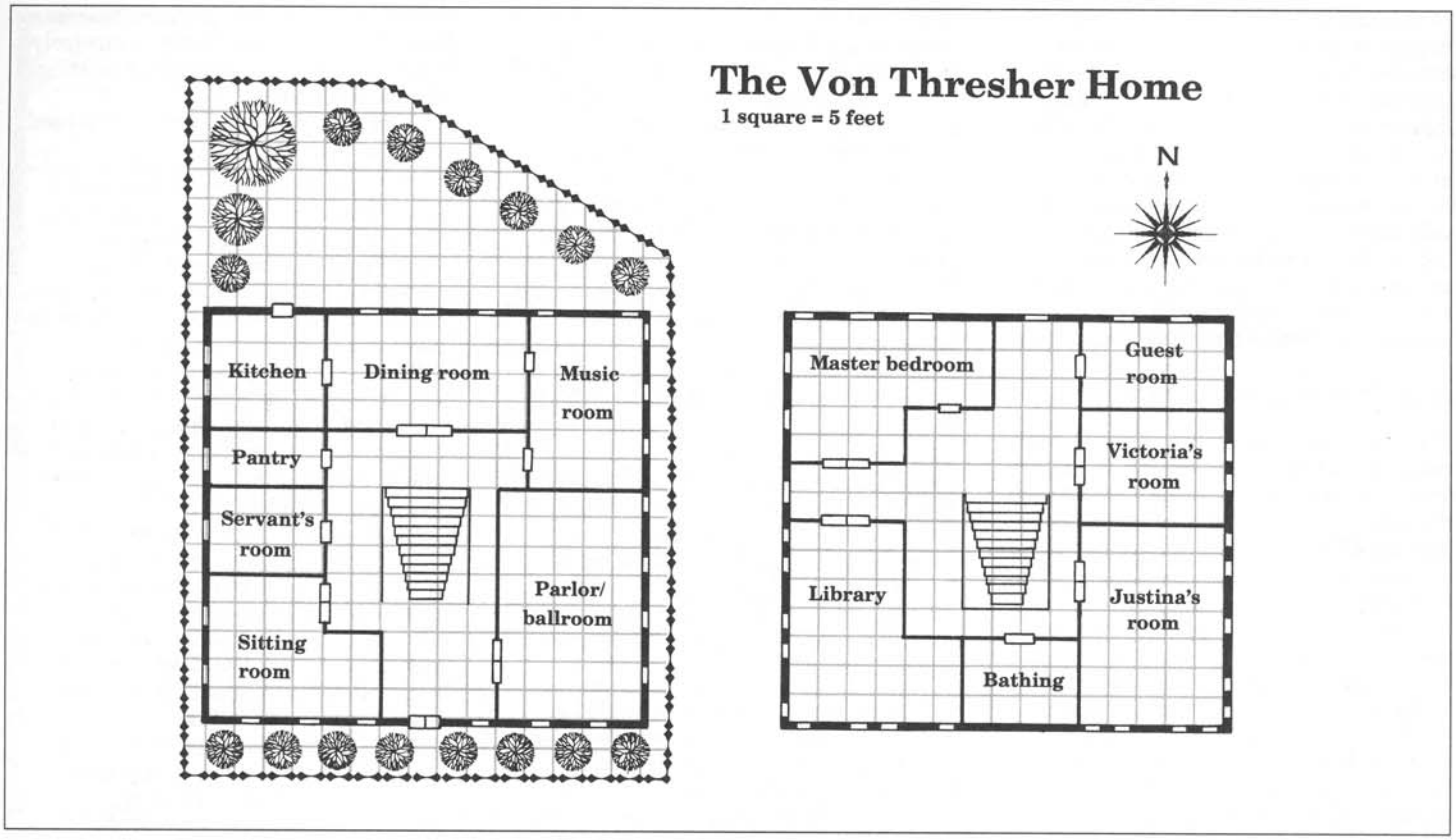
Before **Scene 6** (or **Scene 5**, if Udo killed the PC he visited), Udo's alignment is neutral. After that point, his obsession for Victoria or murder of a PC propels his alignment to neutral evil. Because he is not evil until this point, it should be interesting to see how the PCs react to him, especially if they previously used magic to discern his alignment. Somewhere between **Scenes 3** and **6**, the PCs will have to make a decision regarding their loyalties. Whom do they believe? Do they side with Victoria or Udo? Do they remain neutral?

The adventure assumes that most of the PCs are of good alignment and will help Victoria. The logic of the PCs should go something like this: although Victoria may have been wrong to create Udo, her intentions were not to cause harm or to create evil. Furthermore, while Udo's anger may be justified, his actions definitely aren't.

PCs who are particularly sympathetic with Udo may attempt to dissuade him from continuing to stalk Victoria. While this approach may be noble, it won't work. Udo is obsessed with marrying Victoria; he will not take no for an answer. Anyone keeping Victoria from him is an enemy and deserves to die.

Lastly, there is the possibility that the PCs decide to leave Victoria to her fate. If this occurs, the adventure ends with Victoria's death and Udo's subsequent suicide. "Good" characters who choose this route should be punished with a madness check or an involuntary alignment change.

The PCs' decision here may affect the rest of the adventure, so DMs should be very familiar with the scenarios that follow so they will be able to maintain a free-flowing story line in case the PCs' actions change the course of the adventure.



Also, the inhabitants of Lausanne do not look kindly upon individuals jumping on their rooftops in the middle of the night; they quickly alert the authorities and neighbors to the presence of these "burglars" by ringing loud bells from within their homes. PCs captured by the authorities are fined accordingly.

If the "visited" PC takes the time to wake the others to help pursue Udo, the golem's trail becomes covered by the falling snow (–5 modifier) during the delay. Divinatory spells may aid the PCs in determining Udo's location, but magic is not a thing to be tampered with nonchalantly in Gothic Earth. PCs casting spells must roll a powers check (see *Masque of the Red Death*, page 55) to see if their actions have captured the attention of the Red Death. PCs successfully tracking Udo find him in his lair (**Scene 3**) if they have not previously encountered him there. Otherwise, he is hiding at Dr. McGinnis's freak show (**Scene 4**).

The engagement ring that Udo left with the PC is gold with a simple but elegant diamond setting. The ring is worth 800 francs.

Scene 6: Setting a Trap

The PCs are to meet Victoria at the Von Thresher's home around 8:00 P.M. on November 4 to set a trap for Udo. When they arrive, read the following:

> Arriving at the Von Thresher home, you quickly knock three times upon the door as Victoria advised. A minute or two passes before the door is unlocked. Victoria peers around the corner of the half-open door. Her right hand shakily holds a derringer.
>
> Several tense moments pass before she withdraws the gun and allows you to enter. "I apologize," she says as you enter the house, "but I had to be certain that you weren't him."
>
> When you are all inside, she closes the door and locks it. "You have free rein of the house to execute your trap," she says.
>
> "Just, please, try not to break anything. I have given the servant the night off, and my uncle and his family are at the opera. They are not due to return until one o'clock or so. I just hope that he proves punctual so they will not have to see Udo."

> Victoria places the derringer in her waist-sash. She feels along the wall unsteadily, until she locates a glass of brandy on a nearby table. It's obvious she's had several drinks already.

The Von Thresher Home

The townhouse serves as a setting for a brief encounter. A map of the home is provided to assist PCs in planning an attack on Udo. Room descriptions are not provided, so DMs need to fill in this information as required. Before the encounter with Udo, the PCs should be given a copy of the map and the following description:

> The Von Threshers live in a large, two-story townhouse. Its ceilings are twenty feet high, and the floors are made of marble and polished wood. The townhouse has no cellar and its attic consists of a small crawlspace. The lower-story windows are five feet off the ground, and the upper-story windows are thirty feet from the ground. A small backyard is enclosed with a wrought-iron fence. The yard is bordered on three sides by neighboring yards.

Victoria expects the PCs to kill Udo. She inform them that Udo's usual method of entry is through her bedroom window, usually around midnight.

Throughout the night, Victoria downs several more drinks in an effort to shield Udo's voice from her mind. Unless the PCs watch her carefully, she is drunk by the time Udo arrives (attacks at –4 while inebriated). Occasionally, she clutches at the derringer for assurance and does not allow the PCs to take it from her. She intends to kill the creature if the PCs cannot.

If the PCs tell Victoria about the visit from Udo, she breaks down in tears. Read or paraphrase the following:

> "I don't deny it. I am guilty of all he says. I've been haunted by his memory far too long. Even now he speaks to me, his raspy voice burrowing inside my head, never letting up. I can never hide from him. He knows that, and I know it now. He intends to kill me."

This night Udo arrives earlier than usual (11:30 P.M.), via a lower story window in the servant's quarters. He spies on the PCs for some time from across the street before he makes his entrance. Udo uses his rogue proficiencies to sneak around the house in an attempt to ascertain the PCs' plans. If encountered, he attacks. If only 1–2 PCs are present and he has the upper hand, Udo fights for several rounds, fleeing only when he loses half his hit points.

His primary goal is to kidnap Victoria, not to kill the PCs. To do this, he attacks when he feels he has the element of surprise, knocking off one PC at a time if necessary, to get to her. If he fights his way through the PCs, Udo attempts to grab Victoria and jump out the nearest window.

When Udo comes into sight, Victoria, for her part, tries to shoot him with bullets she manufactured from the scalpels she used to create him. Victoria suffers a –6 penalty to hit, since she is both inebriated and nonproficient with the derringer.

If a PC is reduced to 0 hp or lower during this encounter, he is knocked unconscious. Victoria can use her physician skills to aid any wounded PCs. (She suffers a –2 penalty on her proficiency check until she sobers.) If Udo loses more than half his hit points, he retreats. Before he does, however, he pauses for one last exchange. Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> Udo cries out in pain and glowers at Victoria.
>
> "So this is how you treat me? I offer you never-ending love, and you try to kill me? Be warned, my lady, I shall be with you on your wedding night. You shall never love another."
>
> Udo turns and launches himself through the nearest window, shattering the glass.

PCs within 5′ of the retreating Udo may attack him as he turns his back. Victoria shoots at Udo as he flees. Udo suffers no damage from the breaking glass or the fall due to his exceptional agility. If Udo is still alive, he runs off into the night, returning to haunt Victoria in the following scenes. By then, he may have fully healed.

If Udo kidnaps Victoria, he heads for the Swiss Alps with his prize. His hope is to find a cave in which to live with his bride. The PCs must track him there to recover her.

If Udo escapes without Victoria, she hires the PCs to act as bodyguards at her wedding for an additional item of jewelry worth 400 francs (negotiable to 600 francs). In addition, she pays the full medical expenses of wounded PCs, though she attempts to heal them personally. If the house has been damaged, Victoria tells her family that the damage was caused by burglars.

If the PCs killed Udo in this encounter, the adventure ends here. It is suggested, however, that the DM allow Udo to survive until the wedding, as it will serve for a more interesting and satisfying conclusion.

Scene 8: The Wedding Approaches

In the event that Udo survived the previous encounter, Victoria hires the PCs to serve as bodyguards until after her wedding, which is to occur at Gustav's country chateau.

Victoria tells Gustav that she is being stalked by a deranged freak, so the PCs are invited to take up residence in the von Rudiger estate to continue protecting her. Victoria is in no danger until her wedding night, but the PCs do not know this. A female PC is able to stay with Victoria at the Von Threshers' household until 8:00 A.M. on November 17, when Victoria and her family arrive at the Von Rudiger estate for final preparations. Victoria introduces the PC to her family as an old friend from Ingolstadt. Her aunt, uncle, and cousin Justina welcome the PC as one of their own.

The DM may drive the PCs into a paranoid frenzy with bumps in the night, tappings on the windows, or perhaps even have a PC awaken to see Udo's cold, yellow eyes staring at him through a bedroom window, only to disappear when the PC blinks.

The PCs will probably spend the intervening days before the wedding healing and planning a trap for Udo. As with the Von Thresher home, Gustav and his father, Hermann, give the PCs access to every room and the honeymoon cottage to prepare their plans.

Maps and descriptions of these locations should likewise be given to the PCs.

Victoria believes Udo won't attack at the wedding due to the numerous guests and guardsmen that will be present. She believes (correctly) that he'll make his move when they leave for their honeymoon cottage. She encourages the PCs to plan an ambush for Udo there.

The wedding is described in detail as the PCs should experience the full extent of the gala event while waiting for Udo's attack. DMs should play out the whole affair as a normal wedding, not as an intermission between encounters with Udo.

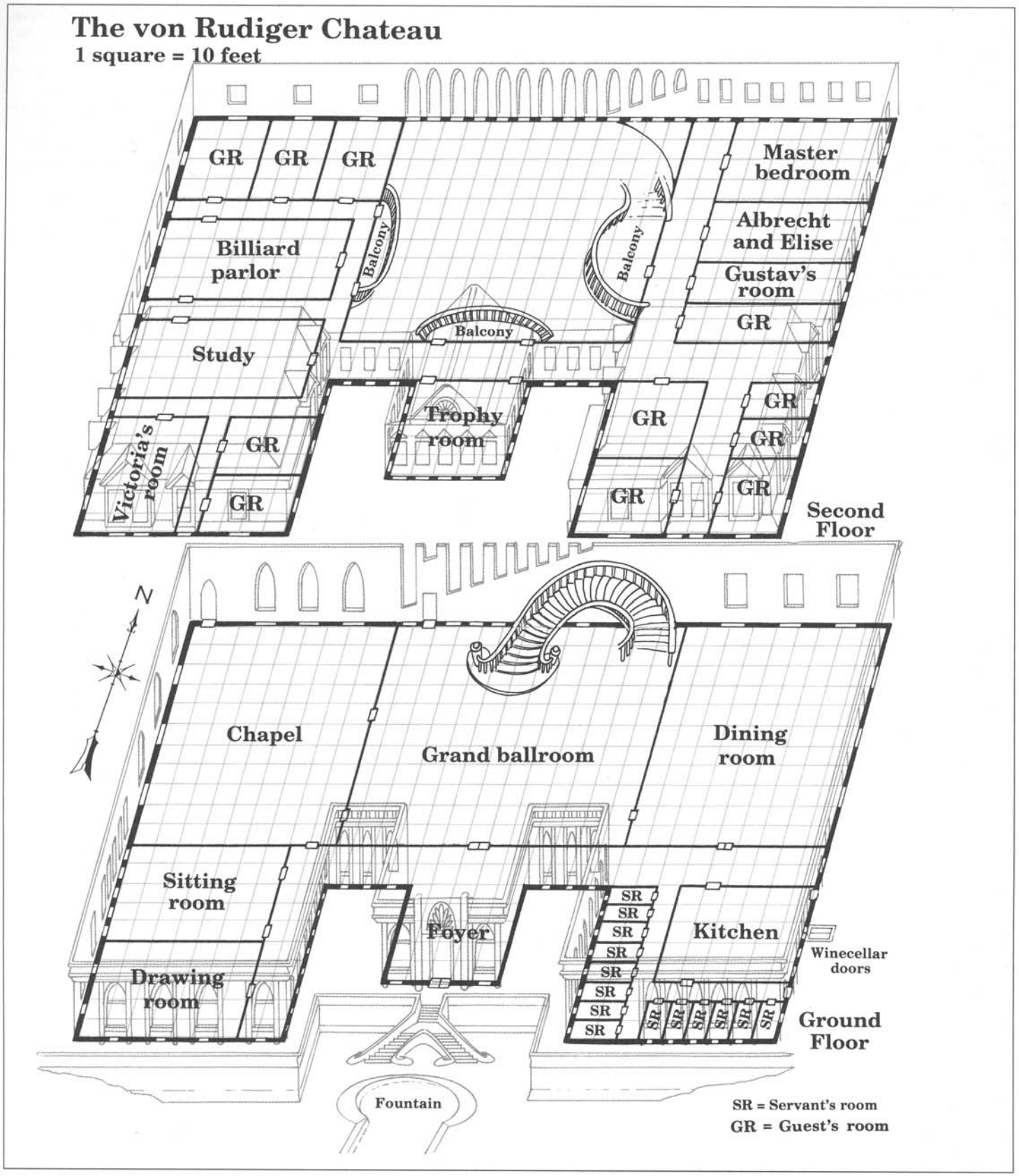
The hint of danger should always be present for the PCs, but the guests are oblivious to the threat. They are enjoying the grand event and attempting to mingle with the PCs as any guest might.

The Von Rudiger Estate

Gustav and his family live on a palatial estate just outside Lausanne. His father, a member of the Swiss Parliament, is a very wealthy man of noble lineage. Their chateau is surrounded by woods and is located at the foot of the Swiss Alps. The important rooms of the chateau are described below.

The Von Rudiger Chateau

> The Von Rudiger Chateau is an impressive, castlelike structure. Every room is spacious and sumptuously decorated with marble, gold, and silk. Immense French windows with red velvet drapes adorn most of the common rooms. The ceilings on


The von Rudiger Chateau
1 square = 10 feet
GR
GR
GR
Billiard parlor
Balcony
Balcony
Balcony
Master bedroom
Albrecht and Elise
Gustav's room
GR
Study
Trophy room
GR
GR
GR
GR
GR
Victoria's room
GR
GR
Second Floor
N
Chapel
Grand ballroom
Dining room
Sitting room
Foyer
SR
SR
SR
SR
SR
SR
SR
SR
Kitchen
Winecellar doors
Drawing room
SR
SR
SR
SR
SR
SR
Ground Floor
Fountain
SR = Servant's room
GR = Guest's room

the first floor are thirty feet high, twenty feet high on the second. More than a dozen well-groomed felines, Hermann von Rudiger's pets, saunter freely about the premises. A few of the cats are friendly and circle around your legs as you walk. Others remain at a distance, ignoring you.

As with the Von Thresher home, a map is included of the chateau. Descriptions of the rooms important to the story appear in the appropriate sections.

Udo uses the attic as his residence and base of operations for his terror tactics. If the PCs check the attic, they are 50% likely to encounter Udo there. If he is there, he attacks the closest PC. If no more than 1–2 PCs are present, he fights until the PCs are dead or he is severely wounded, then he flees the attic (through a window, if necessary). If more PCs are present, he fights for no more than three rounds before fleeing.

Scene 9: The Wedding Day

The wedding day is a hectic affair with over 500 guests. Gustav has hired extra guards to prevent intruders from disturbing the wedding.

Servants hustle throughout the chateau, bumping into one another on their way to making preparations. Last minute deliveries arrive every half-hour. The house is in utter chaos.

To make matters worse, an hour after breakfast, Miss Victoria tells you that she discovered a bouquet of lilies inside her bedroom. All the doors and windows to the chateau were locked last night. Victoria asks you not to say anything to Gustav but warns you to remain alert.

The DM may add additional touches to convey the chaos at the chateau. The presence of the guests' children scurrying about may prove an adequate distraction to the PCs.

The Ceremony

The ceremony takes place as planned. Udo has no intention of attacking the couple in the midst of a large crowd. He is disguised as a guest. To hide his height (6′4″), he remains seated or slouches and moves with the crowds. DMs may want to give the PCs a 30% chance of seeing through any of his disguises. If he is recognized, he flees through the nearest door or window.

Just before noon, the servants begin ushering the guests toward the chapel. Everyone is dressed to the nines for this glorious occasion. Unhurriedly they take their seats, talking about the beautiful arrangements and the great expense to which the widower Herr Hermann von Rudiger went to for his son's wedding.

The guests continue chattering until their noise is halted by a chord from an organ as the wedding march begins. Gustav and his father arrive at the altar together. Next comes the slow waltz of the bride in her flowing gown. A white lace veil covers her face, and pearls encircle her throat. Her uncle Albrecht leads her by the arm down the aisle. The guests gasp at the bride's beauty.

Warily, you watch the entrances to the chapel as the ceremony proceeds. The couple's vows are elaborate, and the ceremony takes longer than expected. Finally you hear the pronouncement of "man and wife," and Gustav removes Victoria's veil to kiss her. A great cheer goes up, drowning out the music. Gustav and Victoria smile as they head back toward the entrance to be escorted by your party to the ballroom for the reception.

The Reception

After the ceremony, the reception begins in the grand ballroom, where the guests engage in polite conversation. The reception is a lavish affair with several well-known musicians, tables heaped with various meats and cheeses, and gallons upon gallons of wine. Hermann von Rudiger toasts his son and new "daughter." He asks that his guests enjoy the food, but to leave room for the dinner that is to be served at 5:00 P.M.

If the PCs choose to mingle, a few of the more notable personalities present are listed in the Guest List sidebar.

Scene 10: The Dinner

At 5:00 P.M. all of the guests are seated at long tables in the dining room. Victoria and Gustav sit at the head of the centermost table. The PCs are assigned to various seats throughout the room, each affording them a constant view of the couple.

> Dinner consists of roasted stuffed quail served on covered, silver plates. The newlyweds are served first. Gustav is engaged in conversation with two fellows to his right, and he ignores the meal placed before him. Victoria, however, raises the cover of her plate. As she does so, her eyes fill with fright and she closes it again quickly. Regaining her composure, she motions for a servant to remove the plate. Gustav does not notice her reaction.Victoria taps Gustav on the shoulder and excuses herself. She then rises and follows the retreating servant into the kitchen.

Those who follow Victoria into the kitchen learn what has upset her:

> Inside the kitchen, Victoria shouts at one of the servants. As you enter, she thrusts her covered plate toward you. Opening the lid, you discover the severed head of one of Hermann's cats. The servants scream at the sight of it. Fortunately, the screams cannot be heard above the din in the dining room. A few of the servants drop to their knees to beg forgiveness for serving such a horror to their new mistress.
>
> Victoria throws her hand to her mouth and rushes from the kitchen to the servants' privies.

Scene 11: The Ball

> The ball begins at 8:00 P.M. The tables, previously heaped with foods and wines, have been removed to allow room for dancing. A chamber orchestra plays some waltzes, and at one point, Divina Sabbastano, a renowned soprano, sings a few arias.
>
> Champagne bottles are uncorked by the score, and laughter and gaiety fill the room. Victoria and Gustav dance among their many guests. Every now and then, you can see Victoria try to guide Gustav toward the center of the room, where she undoubtedly feels safer, away from the room's entrances and exits.

The PCs may decide to stay in the ballroom, patrol the grounds, or go to the honeymoon cottage to await Victoria's arrival. Alternatively, they may split up in order to do all of these things. This encounter assumes at least one PC stays at the ball to guard Victoria.

Udo observes the ball from the staircase balcony, disguised as one of the servants. Every time Gustav's hand touches Victoria's, his heart swells with anger.

At about 10:30 P.M., Victoria's cousin, Justina, complains of a headache and retires to her room, brushing past Udo as she does so. Unless the PCs are watching her specifically, they do not see her leave. If she is alone, Udo follows her into the room and vents his anger by killing her.

If any of the PCs are with her, Udo pretends to be a bustling servant and heads away from the staircase. He does not follow Justina, nor does he kill her. He is too intent upon remaining unnoticed so that he may attack the honey-

Guest List

The following guests are in attendance at Victoria's wedding.

Hermann von Rudiger: Gustav's widowed father, a former army officer, has inherited his wealth from his father's railroad investments. Indeed, the railroads continue to produce much of his opulence. He is also a member of the Swiss Parliament and enjoys talking about politics and his son, of whom he is very proud.

Albrecht von Thresher: Victoria's uncle. Albrecht took her into his home when Victoria's father died. He is a jovial, heavyset man of kind disposition. He is slightly hard of hearing, which leads to some humorous verbal exchanges. Lord Albrecht von Thresher is an attorney of great repute in Lausanne.

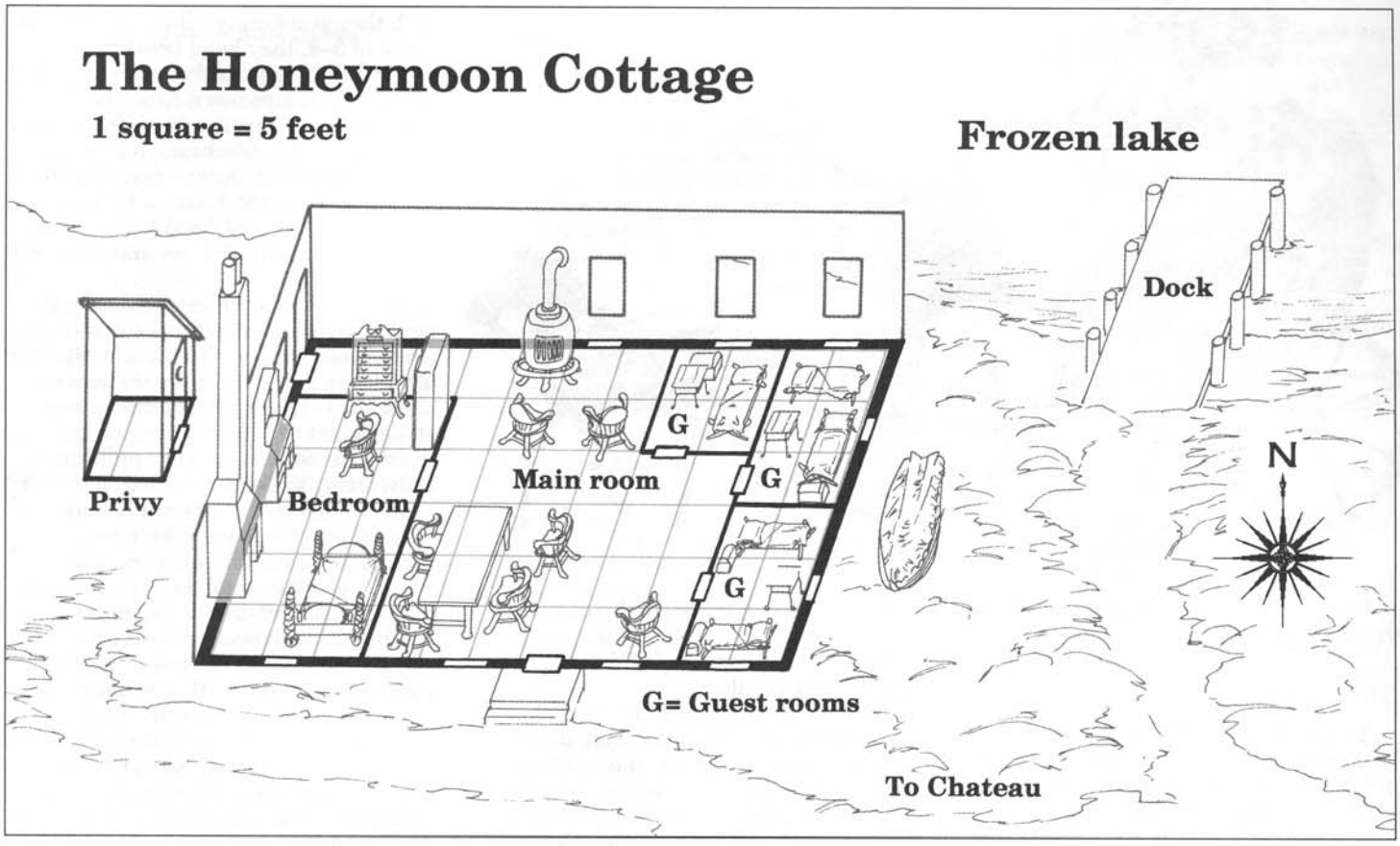
Elise von Thresher: Victoria's aunt and Albrecht von Thresher's wife of 31 years. Elise is thin, proper, and utterly conservative. She is thrilled to see Victoria marrying a proper gentleman, especially one from such a wealthy and prestigious family.

Justina von Thresher: Justina is the youngest daughter (21 years old) and the only unmarried child of the Von Threshers. Justina is happy for her cousin but suspects that all is not right. She has observed Victoria acting very strangely: keeping late hours, talking to herself, sneaking out at night, etc. She has not, however, been able to pry any information out of her cousin. She may reveal her fears to the PCs if they can gain her confidence. Like Victoria in her younger days, Justina is ambitious and wants to be a lawyer or judge. Her mother frowns on her aspirations. Justina is also fond of music and is a very accomplished pianist.

Divina Sabbastano: A famous soprano renowned throughout the world and an acquaintance of the Von Rudiger family, Divina is very wealthy and aloof. She believes she is loftier than any of the nobility present and expects to be treated as such. She is accompanied by an entourage of servants who throw rose petals wherever she treads. Divina will not even acknowledge a PC who is not of the noble class.

Sigmund Freud: Dr. Freud is Gustav's distant cousin. He is not happy to be attending the affair, but his wife, Martha, insisted it was the socially correct thing to do. Although a medical doctor, Sigmund views the PCs as an opportunity to do more research on a side interest: dreams. He attempts to change the topic of any talk begun in his presence to that of dreams. Given the chance, he prods the PCs for dream experiences.

Martha Bernays Freud: Sigmund's wife is uninterested in his questions in regards to dreams, which she's heard over a thousand times. She mingles with Elise von Thresher and anyone else wishing to chat.



mooners on the way to their cottage.

If Udo kills Justina, Victoria, having learned that her cousin took ill from the champagne served and retired to her room, goes looking for her to say her evening farewell at about 10:50 P.M. If a PC follows her, read the following:

> "Justina! Justina!" Victoria calls, knocking on the door. The ballroom noise drowns out her voice.
>
> "Perhaps she is asleep," Victoria says to you. "The poor darling could never handle her drink. I'll just go in and awaken her. It will take only a minute." She eases past you into the room. Suddenly, you hear her scream, and she stumbles out the door toward you, falling at your feet.
>
> "No! No!" she mutters. "Not Justina! No!" She begins to sob.
>
> Inside the room, a breeze from an open window chills the room like an omen of death. Your eyes turn to the lifeless form of Justina stretched across the canopied bed. Moving closer, you can see her vacant eyes staring back and almost through you. Her satin dress is in tatters, and her head hangs limply to one side.
>
> Victoria shambles into the doorway, wiping the tears from her eyes.
>
> "We've got to leave," she mumbles, still staring at her dead cousin. "Gustav and I must... before anyone else is hurt. Already my creation has caused too much ill. And my poor uncle, how will I explain this to him? His heart will be irreparably broken."
>
> Victoria straightens herself. "Come," she says, "we must tell your companions what has occurred, but we mustn't alert the guests or my uncle. We'll prepare the carriage as planned and leave immediately."

Victoria finds her derringer before saying farewell to her guests, keeping the weapon hidden in her sash again. If Justina is dead, Victoria's heart is hardened by the pain, and she plans to seek revenge against Udo. If Justina still lives, the honeymoon couple still departs at 11:00 P.M. as scheduled.

Scene 12: The Honeymoon

Victoria and Gustav are to honeymoon at a lakeside cottage, one mile north of the Von Rudiger chateau. The PCs should have been given ample time to form a plan regarding the couple's protection on the country road. A thick forest of snow-covered pines surrounds the right side of the route, and a frozen lake clings to the left side of the road.

The Cottage

Hermann von Rudiger uses the five-room cabin as a hunting lodge in the winter and a boathouse in the summer. Its front and back doors bolt from the inside.

In the main room are a wood-burning stove, a bearskin rug, a table, and several wooden, fur-covered chairs. The bedroom contains a large four-poster bed, a writing desk, a wardrobe, and a fireplace. The guest rooms all are furnished with a small bed, a nightstand, and a footlocker.

Outside the cottage is an outhouse, a short pier, and a large rowboat.

The lake is covered with a thin sheet of ice roughly 2″ thick.

The Attack

Unless the PCs have made other arrangements, Gustav's servant, Otto, brings the honeymoon coach to the chateau around 11:00 P.M. to take the newlyweds to the cottage. Fifteen minutes into their journey, Udo jumps from a tree onto the moving coach. He attacks the driver, attempting to throw him off the side. Roll for surprise, then allow a Dexterity check for the driver to remain seated — a surprised driver suffers a –3 penalty.

Any PCs inside the coach during the attack hear a loud "thud" and feel a sudden jar when Udo leaps onto the coach. If the driver is unseated, they also hear a scream as he falls off the coach and past the window.

If Udo unseats the driver, he grabs the reins and drives the horses to the edge of the pier and toward the frozen lake. The horses are panicked by his inhuman presence, and they run fullspeed toward the ice.

If the driver remains seated, he must drop the reins to fight Udo or suffer attacks from behind. Regardless of whether the driver drops the reins, the horses are spooked by Udo's presence, and they head fullspeed for the pier as the road dead-ends at the cottage. Unless halted (a successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll required to halt), the horses run the coach onto the lake in five rounds.

Anyone thrown from the coach before it hits the lake suffers 3d6 hp damage upon impact unless (30% chance) a snowbank breaks their fall, lessening the damage to 1d6.

Any PC climbing onto the roof while the coach is moving must make a successful Strength check to maintain a hold. The PC must also make a successful save vs. paralyzation or be hit by tree limbs for 2d6 hp damage. If struck by the branches, the PC must make an additional Strength check at –1 to avoid being thrown off the coach. Two rounds of climbing are required to reach the driver's seat and gain the reins, leaving three or fewer rounds to stop the careening coach. Any PC attempting to stop the horses is subject to two rounds of attacks from Udo.

PCs may elect to jump out of the coach before it goes off the pier. A successful save vs. paralyzation is required to jump from the coach. An unsuccessful save indicates the PC suffers 2d6 hp falling damage; a successful save indicates half damage, rounded down. If time allows, Victoria and Gustav attempt to jump from the speeding coach. PCs abandoning the coach may attempt to drag the couple out with them. A successful attack roll is needed to push or grab them.

Anyone successfully stopping the coach becomes the subject of Udo's attacks. If the PC is slain and no one else comes to fight Udo, he tries to start the horses toward the lake again. Because they are spooked, the DM should roll 1d4 for their reaction. On a roll of 1, the horses break free of the coach and run for the woods. On a roll of 2, they stubbornly refuse to move. On a roll of 3–4, they head breakneck for the ice. If they break free or refuse to move, Udo jumps down from the driver's seat and rips the doors from the coach. He then attacks anyone within, preferring to kill Gustav first, the PCs second, and saving Victoria for last. If he kills Gustav and few PCs stand in his way, he grabs Victoria and attempts to flee.

If the horses are headed for the lake again, or were never stopped, the coach careens off the pier and through the thin ice. Within five rounds the icy waters claim the carriage, though the horses struggle to keep their footing on the nearby ice as it sinks. They pull frantically, trying to break free from it, but the weight of the coach inexorably pulls them under; they sink within two rounds of the coach's submergence, drowning within another two rounds. If Victoria and Gustav are inside the coach, the crash breaks Victoria's arm and knocks Gustav unconscious. If the pair is not rescued within seven rounds, they drown as Victoria cannot open the coach's doors from inside (they open out).

Any PCs caught in the coach will have to await rescue unless they can break the coach's windows and swim out (Bend Bars/Lift Gates to break the glass). Victoria does not have the strength for such a maneuver. Also, any PC hanging onto the coach as it enters the lake is thrown off. The PC has a 50/50 chance of falling into the water. Udo lands on the ice. Heavily encumbered PCs falling into the water sink within two rounds. Less encumbered PCs may tread water or swim (if they are proficient at this skill). DMs should see the *PHB* for rules on swimming and holding one's breath.

If a PC falls near him, on the ice or in the water, Udo flings himself at him. If the attack takes place on the ice, he tries to push the PC into the water. If the attack takes place in the water, Udo attempts to drown the PC. Udo does not need oxygen to survive, so he cannot drown, though he may pretend to do so if seriously wounded.

If the PCs disregard him and attempt to rescue the honeymooners or anyone inside the coach, Udo attacks them. If Victoria is to be the wife of another, he prefers to see her drown. Udo fights with ferocity and does not flee the scene of this battle unless reduced to 10 hit points or less, whereupon he sinks to the bottom of the lake to bide his time.

Rescuing Victoria and Gustav

As the coach sinks rapidly, there is little time for the rescuers to perform elaborate rescue maneuvers. PCs may use rope if it is readily accessible upon their persons. Each rescue attempt requires a successful Bend Bars roll and two rounds to complete. Any rescuer standing upon the surrounding ice has a 10% chance per round of falling through. For every PC standing within the same 10′ area, the chance increases 10% per PC. If the PCs are close to the pier or solid ground, they may attempt a Dexterity check to jump to safety. Lying flat on the ice, thereby redistributing the weight, reduces the chance of breaking the ice by half. PCs who fall through the ice risk drowning. The safest means of retrieving victims is for at least two PCs to form a human chain across the ice. In the event that the ice breaks, the next PC in line can pull the sinking PC out of the water.

Meanwhile, the rest of the PCs must battle Udo. If they engage him quickly, he is unable to prevent any rescue attempts. Fighting on the ice results in a –2 attack penalty for all parties due to the slippery conditions. Also, there is a base 10% chance that the ice breaks, forcing each combatants to make a successful Dexterity check to avoid falling in the water.

Rescuing drowning victims by jumping in after them is tricky business due to the extremely cold temperature of the water. A rescuer must have the swimming proficiency and make a successful Strength check at –2 to rescue the victim in question. If unsuccessful, the rescuer must make an additional Strength check or begin to drown. In fairness to the PC, the DM should warn any player attempting to rescue another about the risks involved.

The DM should convey a sense of urgency and suspense in the final combat. The encounter should be run very quickly, requiring players to think spontaneously. Be certain that the PCs' intentions are fully understood before rolling the dice for the outcome of this extremely dangerous combat encounter. The action should be fast, tense. Don't let the dice slow things down. If this begins to happen, you may want to make up your own results as you go. Also, if too many people begin to drown and the adventure becomes bleak instead of fun, the DM may have Udo, in a change of heart, rescue them.

Concluding the Adventure

If Victoria survives, she gladly pays the PCs the 2,500 francs in jewelry and currency she promised, and she is eternally grateful, as is Gustav if he survived. If he drowned, his father is devastated but doesn't blame the PCs. Victoria remains a widow and joins a religious order to repent for her creation. She may even practice medicine again — or experiment.

If Gustav survived, he remembers little of the encounter other than the terrible accident; he was knocked unconscious for the duration of combat. He accepts almost any explanation given about the incident (within reason). He and his family shower the PCs with accolades.

If the PCs tell him the truth about Victoria's part in this madness, or if he finds out later, he divorces her so that her past does not shame his family. In this case, he provides her with an equitable financial settlement by which she may live out the rest of her life comfortably. He still loves her, after all.

If for any reason Victoria did not survive this encounter, Gustav grieves for a few months but eventually marries Justina, Victoria's cousin, if she still lives. Because Justina is not content to be a complacent, sit-at-home wife, however, their marriage is politically appealing but rocky and loveless.

Through Gustav's and Victoria's connections, the PCs are bound to be offered further work. And perhaps they have not seen the last of Udo. If he happened to "drown," perhaps his body was never recovered. Perhaps the icy water put Udo in a state of suspended animation, only to return next spring. Or perhaps Victoria's ambition returns, prompting her to reassemble Udo, or even worse, continue her experiments.

If Victoria and Gustav survive the ice, the DM should award the PCs 1,500 XP each. This amount should be halved if they made the attempt but were unsuccessful. No experience should be awarded if they did nothing to save the couple. If Udo was killed, another 4,000 XP should be divided among the group.

Also, If Udo is killed, Doctor McGinnis learns of the PCs' involvement in his friend's death, and he decides to seek revenge. First, he tries to locate Udo's body. If Udo's body sank into the lake and was left there by the PCs, he recovers it. Within six months, he successfully reanimates the golem. Even if the body is unrecoverable, Doctor McGinnis, a very intelligent and patient man, begins to plot his revenge on the PCs. He delves further into the magical arts, becoming a tool of the Red Death. His attacks on the PCs are subtle and may come in the form of attempts at character defamation, loss of fortune, loss of a spouse or children to a strange disease, etc. He tracks the PCs wherever they go.

Of course, if Udo survived the encounter by feigning death and sinking to the bottom of the lake, he seeks his own revenge. He waits for the PCs to leave Lausanne before returning for Victoria. Without the PCs' aid, Gustav is murdered, and Victoria is captured. Udo hides her away in the mountains. DMs may have the PCs learn of her disappearance and Gustav's murder. They may try to track him into the Swiss Alps to recover Victoria. If they do not go after her, she escapes from Udo and leaps to her death. Udo then blames the PCs for her death and seeks them out.

One final adventure centers around the *Frankenstein Papers*. Assuming the PCs recovered them, a qabal, such as the Brotherhood of Alchemae or the Fellowship of the Crimson Dawn (see *The Gothic Earth Gazetteer* for further information) might learn that the PCs have them and come looking. In their determination to learn the secrets behind resurrecting the dead, they do not stop at anything, killing for the papers if they must. Also, any PC who has read the papers may become obsessed by the idea of building a golem himself. This could lead to some interesting consequences. Ω